

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1-19. (Canceled)

20. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for the production of a cable having at least one covering layer consisting of a composition comprising at least one polymeric material and a mineral filler in a quantity greater than 30% by weight relative to the total weight of the composition, said apparatus comprising:

at least one charging hopper for feeding the polymeric material and said mineral filler, optionally premixed together or with other components of said composition;

at least one extruder comprising at least one filtration section, at least one extrusion screw, and at least one extrusion head inside of which is contained a die for the purpose of fitting said covering layer around at least one conducting element of said cable;

at least one device for unwinding said conducting element; and

at least one device for winding said cable, wherein the at least one filtration section of said extruder has a filter support plate comprising an internal surface and a plurality of elements, which protrude therefrom and define a plurality of sectors between and within which the filtered composition flows, and

wherein said plurality of sectors define at least one ~~passage for the filtered composition that is substantially parallel to the inlet direction of the composition to be~~

filtered pathway to direct the filtered composition to a central passage of the filter support plate.

21. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 20, further comprising at least one cooling unit for cooling said cable.

22. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 21, further comprising at least one crosslinking unit positioned before said at least one cooling unit.

23. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said filter support plate is positioned downstream of said at least one extrusion screw.

24. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein the filtration efficiency (E) is greater than 0.8.

25. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 24, wherein the filtration efficiency (E) is greater than 0.9.

26. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim 20, wherein said at least one conducting element is subjected to a constant pull by a system of pulleys, gears, or pulleys and gears.

27. (Currently Amended) An apparatus according to claim 26, wherein the system of pulleys, gears, or pulleys and gears ~~subjects~~ configured to feed the at least one conducting element ~~to a constant pull~~ at a rate between 600 and 1500 m/min.

28. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to claim to Claim 21, further comprising a drying stage positioned downstream from said at least one cooling unit.